

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-10 ISO-00 SAM-01 OMB-01 NIC-01 SAJ-01

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FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3389

INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

CINCPNT FOR POLAD

CINCEUR FOR POLAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUANDA 0360

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT AO WA SF

SUBJECT: OVAAMBO SEPARATIST ACTIVITY IN SOUTHERN ANGOLA

1. A SOUTH AFRICAN DIPLOMAT STATIONED IN LUANDA RECENTLY RETURNED FROM A TRIP TO THE ANGOLAN-NAMIBIAN BORDER AND PASSED ONTO UN HIS INTERPRETATION OF THE RECENT EVENTS THERE AND AN OUTLINE OF WHAT SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT POLICY IS LIKELY TO BE TOWARD A SWAPO OR AN OVAMBO ATTEMPT TO TAKE OVER SOUTHERN ANGOLA.

2. THE SOUTH AFRICAN SAID THEIR INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS INSIDE SWAPO AND AMONG THE OVAMBO-CUNHAMA PEOPLE (THE TRIBE IS CALLED OVAMBO IN CONFIDENTIAL

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NAMIBIA AND CUNHAMA IN ANGOLA) INDICATE THAT THE RECENT TAKE OVER

OF A BORDER POST BY UNITA (LUANDA 0354) IS THE WORK OF ELEMENTS NOMINALLY BELONGING TO UNITA BUT FAVORING AN INDEPENDENT OVAMBO-LAND ENCOMPASSING A PORTION OF SOUTHERN ANGOLA AND NORTHERN NAMIBIA. THE SOUTH AFRICANS BELIEVE THAT DR ANTONIO VAKULUKUTA, HEAD OF THE UNITA OFFICE FOR SOUTHERN ANGOLA, IS ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN HELPING THE OVAMBOS. ACCORDING TO THE SOUTH AFRICAN, VAKULUKUTA WAS BORN IN NAMIBIA AND WAS ONE OF SEVERAL CADRE SWAPO SENT TO WORK WITH UNITA DURING THE LATE 1960'S. SWAPO GAVE SAVIMBI SOME ARMS AND MEN WHEN HE WAS JUST GETTING STARTED IN RETURN FOR A PROMISE OF RIGHTS IN ANGOLA IF HE ACHIEVED POWER. VAKULUKUTA IS NOT PRESENTLY WORKING DIRECTLY FOR SWAPO, SAID OUR SOURCE, BUT RATHER FOR THE OVAMBOS UNDER A UNITA COVER. HIS PRESENT GOAL IS TO SEPARATE A HUNK OF SOUTHERN ANGOLA, BETWEEN THE CUNENE AND CUBANGO RIVERS BY DESTROYING THE ONLY BRIDGE INTO THE REGION AT ROCADAS, OVER THE CUNENE RIVER AND ISOLATING THE AREA FROM ANGOLANS. THE CAPITAL WOULD BE AT PEREIRA JECA. THIS PARCEL WOULD BE DECLARED AN INDEPENDENT OVAMBOLAND AND USED AS A BASE TO LIBERATE THE OVAMBOS STILL IN NAMIBIA. THIS STRATEGY IS APPARENTLY NOT ENDORSED BY SWAPO LEADERS, WHO WISH TO OVERCOME ETHNIC DIVISIONS WITHIN NAMIBIA AND EVENTUALLY LIBERATE THE ENTIRE TERRITORY.

3. THE SOUTH AFRICANS ARE NOT UPSET OVER THE POSSIBILITY OF AN OVAMBO SEPARATIST ORGANIZATION CLAIMING A CONTIGUOUS CHUNK OF ANGOLA. THEY SEE THIS AS AIDING THEIR DIVIDE AND RULE POLICIES IN NAMIBIA. IN THEIR OPINION AN OVAMBO SEPARATIST MOVEMENT WILL CREATE CHAOS WITHIN SWAPO AND IN THE OVAMBO HOMELAND. THIS WILL ALARM THE OTHER, SMALLER TRIBAL GROUPS IN NAMIBIA AND THEY WILL BE MORE INCLINED TO LEAN TOWARDS THE WHITES AS COUNTER-BALANCE TO THE OVAMBOS IN ANY FUTURE AUTONOMOUS OR INDEPENDENT NAMIBIA.

4. SHOULD SWAPO SET UP MILITARY BASES INSIDE ANGOLA, OR, FOR THAT MATTER, SHOULD OTHER LIBERATION GROUPS DO LIKEWISE IN MOZAMBIQUE, AND LAUNCH ATTACKS AGAINST NAMIBIA OR THE RSA, SOUTH AFRICA WOULD RESPOND WITH MILITARY FORCE AND APPLY THE DOCTRINE OF HOT PURSUIT TO CROSS BORDERS WITH TROOPS AND WOULD ALSO MAKE AIR STRIKES AGAINST THE INSURGENT BASES. THE SOURCE EMPHASIZED THAT SOUTH AFRICA WOULD ADOPT A PUBLIC-OPINION BE DAMNED APPROACH. HE SAID THERE ARE PRESENTLY SOME SMALL SWAPO BASES IN ANGOLA, TIED TO UNITA, BUT THAT THEY HAVE CARRIED OUT NO OFFENSIVE MILITARY OPERATIONS.

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5. IN AN APRIL 3 PRESS CONFERENCE IN SA DA BANDEIRA DR. VAKULUKUTA DENIED HIS INVOLVEMENT WITH SWAPO AND SAID THERE WAS NO TENSION IN THE CUNENE REGION. OFFICIAL PORTUGUESE SOURCES TOLD US THE SITUATION THERE IS SERIOUS AND THAT THEY ARE DISPATCHING AN INTEGRATED PORTUGUESE-UNITA FORCE TO THE REGION TO RE-ESTABLISH ORDER. TWO PORTUGUESE BUSINESSMEN RECENTLY RETURNED FROM PEREIRA D'EECA AND SA DA BANDEIRA ALSO TOLD US THE SITUATION IS VERY GRAVE AND THAT MOST PEOPLE BELIEVE SWAPO AND DR VAKULUKUTA ARE BEHIND

THE DISTURBANCES.

6. A HIGH-RANKING PORTUGUESE MILITARY OFFICIAL TOLD ME ON APRIL 4. THAT VAKULUKUTA IS A POWER IN HIS OWN RIGHT AND THAT ALTHOUGH HE RECOGNIZES THE AUTHORITY OF JONAS SAVIMBI, DOES AS HE SEES FIT IN HIS REGION AND OFTEN MAKES POLICY ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE. THE SOURCE SAID THE PROBLEM IS NOT SO MUCH ONE OF UNITA ACTIVELY SUPPORTING OVAMBOS AS IT IS OF LENIENCY TOWARD THEIR ACTIVITIES. HE SAID THAT IN ADDITION TO SENDING AN INTEGRATED FORCE TO THE AREA, THE PORTUGUESE AUTHORITIES HAVE TALKED WITH THE SWAPO LEADERSHIP IN ZAMBIA TO ENLIST THEIR HELP IN CONTROLLING THE SITUATION. AS HE EXPLAINED IT, AN UNDETERMINED NUMBER OF OVAMBO ACTIVISTS ENTERED ANGOLA TO AGITATE AMONG THEIR KINSMEN FOR A SEPARATE OVAMBO STATE. THE PORTUGUESE AUTHORITIES HAVE RECEIVED REPORTS THAT THEY HAVE STONED SCHOOLS, CALLED FOR INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH AND ARE GENERALLY MAKING A NUISANCE OF THEMSELVES. FEW OTHER DETAILS ARE AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME.

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